

The
Recessional
by
Rudyard Kipling

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RECESSATIONAL
AND OTHER POEMS



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BY

RUDYARD KIPLING



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RECESSIONAL AND OTHER POEMS



Recessional

A VICTORIAN ODE

 OD of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The Captains and the Kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

Recessional

Far-called, our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre !
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord !

Amen.

The Vampire

*AS SUGGESTED BY THE PAINTING
BY PHILIP BURNE-JONES*

 FOOL there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I !)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not care),
But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I !)

Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste
And the work of our head and hand
Belong to the woman who did not know
(And now we know that she never could know)
And did not understand.

A fool there was and his goods he spent
(Even as you and I !)
Honour and faith and a sure intent

The Vampire

(And it was n't the least what the lady meant),
But a fool must follow his natural bent
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost
And the excellent things we planned
Belong to the woman who did n't know why
(And now we know she never knew why)
And did not understand.

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide
(Even as you and I !)
Which she might have seen when she threw him
aside—
(But it is n't on record the lady tried)
So some of him lived but the most of him died—
(Even as you and I !)

And it is n't the shame and it is n't the blame
That stings like a white-hot brand.

The Vampire

It's coming to know that she never knew why
(Seeing at last she could never know why)
And never could understand.

Danny Deever

“**W**HAT are the bugles blowin' for ?” said
Files-on-Parade.

“To turn you out, to turn you out,” the Colour-
Sergeant said.

“What makes you look so white, so white ?” said
Files-on-Parade.

“I’m dreadin’ what I’ve got to watch,” the Colour-
Sergeant said.

For they’re hangin’ Danny Deever, you can hear
the Dead March play,

The regiment’s in ’ollow square—they’re hang-
in’ him to-day ;

Danny Deever

They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his
stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the
mornin'.

“What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard ?” said
Files-on-Parade.

“It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold,” the Colour-
Sergeant said.

“What makes that front-rank man fall down ?”
says Files-on-Parade.

“A touch o' sun, a touch o' sun,” the Colour-
Sergeant said.

They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are
marchin' of 'im round,

They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on
the ground ;

An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin'
shootin' hound—

O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin' !

Danny Deever

“ ‘Is cot was right—’and cot to mine,” said Files-on-Parade.

“ ‘E’s sleepin’ out an’ far to-night,” the Colour-Sergeant said.

“ I’ve drunk ‘is beer a score o’ times,” said Files-on-Parade.

“ ‘E’s drinkin’ bitter beer alone,” the Colour-Sergeant said.

They are hangin’ Danny Deever, you must mark
’im to ’is place,

For ‘e shot a comrade sleepin’—you must look
’im in the face ;

Nine ’undred of ’is county an’ the regiment’s
disgrace, [mornin’].

While they’re hangin’ Danny Deever in the

“ What’s that so black agin the sun ?” said Files-on-Parade.

“ It’s Danny fightin’ ’ard for life,” the Colour-Sergeant said.

Danny Deever

“What’s that that whimpers over’ead ?” said Fileson-Parade.

“It’s Danny’s soul that’s passin’ now,” the Colour-Sergeant said.

For they’re done with Danny Deever, you can
’ear the quickstep play,

The regiment’s in column, and they’re marchin’
us away ;

Ho ! the young recruits are shakin’, an’ they’ll
want their beer to-day,

After hangin’ Danny Deever in the mornin’.



Tommy

 WENT into a public-ouse to get a pint o'
beer,

The publican 'e up an' sez, "We serve no red-
coats here."

The girls be'ind the bar they laughed an' giggled
fit to die,

I outs into the street again, an' to myself sez I :—

O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
"Tommy, go away" ;

But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the
band begins to play,

The band begins to play, my boys, the band be-
gins to play,

O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the
band begins to play.

I went into a theatre as sober as could be,
They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'ad n't none
for me ;

Tommy

They sent me to the gallery or round the music-
'alls,

But when it comes to fightin', Lord ! they 'll shove
me in the stalls !

For it 's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
"Tommy, wait outside" ;

But it 's "Special train for Atkins" when the
trooper 's on the tide,

The troopship 's on the tide, my boys, the troop-
ship 's on the tide,

O it 's "Special train for Atkins" when the
trooper 's on the tide.

Yes, makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while
you sleep

Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they 're starva-
tion cheap ;

An' hustlin' drunken soldiers when they 're goin'
large a bit

Is five times better business than paradin' in full kit.

Tommy

Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
"Tommy, 'ow's yer soul?"

But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the
drums begin to roll,

The drums begin to roll, my boys, the drums
begin to roll,

O it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the
drums begin to roll.

We are n't no thin red 'eroes, nor we are n't no
blackguards too,

But single men in barricks, most remarkable like you ;
An' if sometimes our conduck is n't all your fancy
paints :

Why, single men in barricks don't grow into plas-
ter saints ;

While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
"Tommy, fall be'ind" ;

But it's "Please to walk in front, sir," when
there's trouble in the wind,

Tommy

There's trouble in the wind, my boys, there's
trouble in the wind,

O it's "Please to walk in front, sir," when
there's trouble in the wind.

You talk o' better food for us, an' schools, an' fires,
an' all :

We'll wait for extra rations if you treat us rational.
Don't mess about the cook-room slops, but prove it
to our face.

The Widow's uniform is not the soldier-man's dis-
grace.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
"Chuck him out, the brute!"

But it's "Saviour of 'is country" when the guns
begin to shoot.

Yes, it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
anything you please ;

But Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool—you bet that
Tommy sees !

“Fuzzy-Wuzzy”

(SUDAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)

 E'VE fought with many men acrost the seas,

An' some of 'em was brave, an' some was not,
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese ;

But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.
We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im :

'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Suakin,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.

So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome
in the Soudan ;

You're a pore benighted 'eathen, but a first-
class fightin' man ;

We gives you your certificate, an' if you want
it signed,

We'll come an' have a romp with you when-
ever you're inclined.

Fuzzy-Wuzzy

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman give us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style :
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller ;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.

Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the
missis an' the kid ;
Our orders was to break you, an' of course
we went an' did.
We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it was n't
'ardly fair ;
But for all the odds agin' you, Fuzzy-Wuz,
you broke the square.

'E 'as n't got no papers of 'is own,
'E 'as n't got no medals nor rewards,

Fuzzy-Wuzzy

So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
In usin' of 'is long two-anded swords :
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
With 'is coffin-eaded shield an' shovel-spear,
An 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last an 'ealthy Tommy for a year.

So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your
friends which are no more ;
If we 'ad n't lost some messmates we would
'elp you to deplore ;
But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll call
the bargain fair,
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you
crumpled up the square !

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's ackin' at our 'ead ;
'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' he's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.

Fuzzy-Wuzzy

'E's a daisy', 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb !
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on the spree ;
'E's the on'y thing that does n't give a damn
For a Regiment o' British Infantree !

So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome
in the Soudan ;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen, but a first-
class fightin' man ;
An' 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your
'ayrick 'ead of 'air —
You big black boundin' beggar—for you
broke a British square !



Screw-Guns

 MOKIN' my pipe on the mountings, sniffin'
the mornin' cool,
I walks in my old brown gaiters along o' my old
brown mule,
With seventy gunners be'ind me, an' never a beg-
gar forgets
It's only the pick of the Army that handles the
dear little pets—'Tss ! 'Tss !

For you all love the screw-guns—the screw-
guns they all love you !
So when we call round with a few guns, o' course
you will know what to do—hoo ! hoo !
Jest send in your Chief an' surrender—it's
worse if you fights or you runs :
You can go where you please, you can skid up
the trees, but you don't get away from the
guns.

Screw-Guns

They sends us along where the roads are, but
mostly we goes where they ain't ;
We'd climb up the side of a sign-board, an' trust to
the stick o' the paint :
We've chivied the Naga an' Looshai, we've give
the Afreedeman fits,
For we fancies ourselves at two thousand, we guns
that are built in two bits—'Tss ! 'Tss !

For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

If a man does n't work, why, we drills 'im an'
teaches 'im 'ow to behave ;
If a beggar can't march, why, we kills 'im an' rat-
tles 'im into 'is grave.
You've got to stand up to our business, an' spring
without snatchin' or fuss.
D' you say that you sweat with the field-guns ? By
God, you must lather with us—'Tss ! 'Tss !

For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

Screw-Guns

The eagles is screamin' around us, the river's a-
moanin' below ;

We're clear o' the pine an' the oak-scrub, we're
out on the rocks an' the snow ;

An' the wind is as thin as a whip-lash what carries
away to the plains

The rattle an' stamp of the lead-mules, the jinglety-
jink o' the chains—'Tss ! 'Tss !

For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

There's a wheel on the Horns o' the Mornin', an'
a wheel on the edge o' the Pit,

An' a drop into nothin' beneath you as straight as a
beggar can spit :

With the sweat runnin' out o' your shirt-sleeves,
an' the sun off the snow in your face,

An' 'arf o' the men on the drag-ropes to hold the
old gun in 'er place—'Tss ! 'Tss !

For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

Screw-Guns

Smokin' my pipe on the mountings, sniffin' the mornin' cool,

I climbs in my old brown gaiters along o' my old brown mule.

The monkey can say what our road was—the wild-goat 'e knows where we passed.

Stand easy, you long-eared old darlin's ! Out drag-ropes ! With shrapnel ! Hold fast—'Tss ! 'Tss !

For you all love the screw-guns—the screw-guns they all love you !

So when we take tea with a few guns, o' course you will know what to do—hoo ! hoo !

Jest send in your Chief an' surrender—it's worse if you fights or you runs :

You may 'ide in the caves, they 'll be only your graves, but you can't get away from the guns !



Mandalay

BY the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks o' me ;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say :
"Come you back, you British soldier ; come you back to Mandalay !"

Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay :
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay ?
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay !

Mandalay

'Er petticoat was yaller, an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat—jes' the same as
Theebaw's Queen ;
An' I seed 'er first a-smokin' of a whackin' white
cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot.
 Bloomin' idol made o' mud—
 What they called the Great Gawd Budd ;
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er
 where she stud !
 On the road to Mandalay, etc.

When the mist was on the rice-fields, an' the sun
 was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "Kulla-
 lo-lo!"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder, an' 'er cheek agin
 my cheek,
We useter watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin'
 teak.

Mandalay

Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squudgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf
afraid to speak !
On the road to Mandalay, etc.

But that's all shove be'ind me—long ago an' fur
away,
An' there ain't no 'buses runnin' from the Bank to
Mandalay ;
An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year
soldier tells :
"If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you won't never
'eed naught else."
No ! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells,
An' the sunshine, an' the palm-trees, an' the
tinkly temple-bells,
On the road to Mandalay, etc.

Mandalay

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gritty pavin'-stones,

An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones ;

Though I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,

An' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do they understand ?

Beefy face an' grubby 'and—

Law ! wot *do* they understand ?

I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land !

On the road to Mandalay, etc.

Ship me somewhere East of Suez, where the best is like the worst,

Where there are n't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst ;

For the temple-bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be—

Mandalay

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' lazy at the
sea,—

On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnin's when we
went to Mandalay !

On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China
'crost the Bay !



Troopin'

(OUR ARMY IN THE EAST)

TROOPIN', troopin', troopin' to the sea :
'Ere's September come again—the six-year
men are free.

O leave the dead be'ind us, for they cannot come
away
To where the ship's a-coalin' up that takes us 'ome
to-day.

We're goin' 'ome, we're goin' 'ome !

Our ship is at the shore,
An' you must pack your 'aversack,
For we won't come back no more.

Ho, don't you grieve for me,
My lovely Mary Ann ;
For I'll marry you yit on a fourp'ny bit
As a time-expired man !

The Malabar's in 'arbour, with the Jumner at 'er tail,
An' the time-expired 's waitin' of 'is orders for to sail.

Troopin'

Ho ! the weary waitin' when on Khyber 'ills we
lay ;

But the time-expired's waitin' of 'is orders 'ome
to-day.

They 'll turn us out at Portsmouth wharf in cold
an' wet an' rain,

All wearin' Injian cotton kit, but we will not com-
plain.

They 'll kill us of pneumonia—for that's their
little way ;

But damn the chills and fever, men ! we 're goin'
'ome to-day !

Troopin', troopin'—winter's round again !

See the new draf's pourin' in for the old campaign.

Ho, you poor recruits ! but you 've got to earn
your pay—

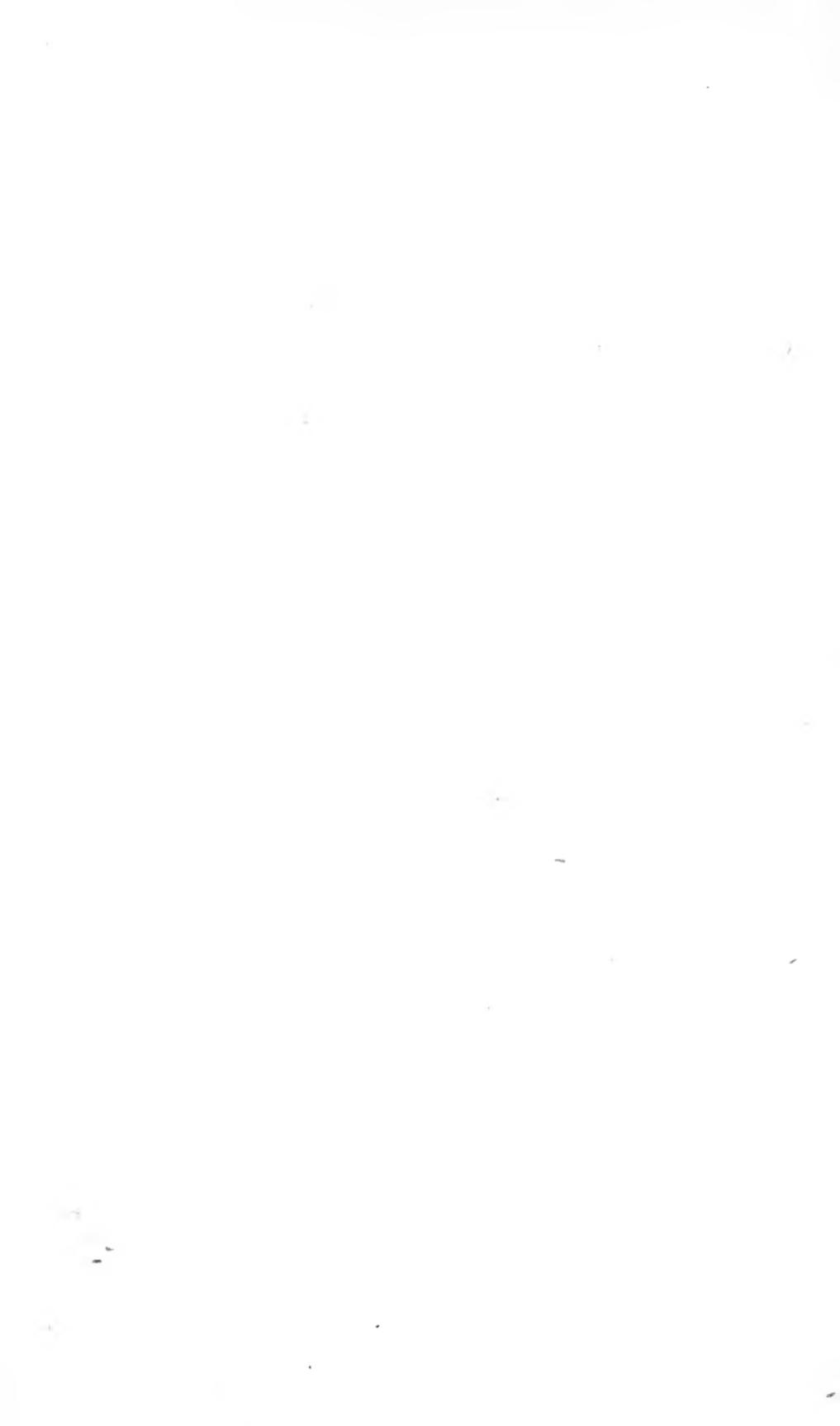
What 's the last from Lunnon, lads ? We 're goin'
there to-day.

Troopin'

Troopin', troopin'—give another cheer !
'Ere's to English women an' a quart of English
beer ;
The Colonel an' the regiment an' all who've got
to stay,
Gawd's mercy strike 'em gentle ! Whoop ! we're
goin' 'ome to-day.

We're goin' 'ome, we're goin' 'ome !
Our ship is at the shore,
An' you must pack your 'aversack,
For we won't come back no more.
Ho, don't you grieve for me,
My lovely Mary Ann ;
For I'll marry you yit on a fourp'ny bit,
As a time-expired man !





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